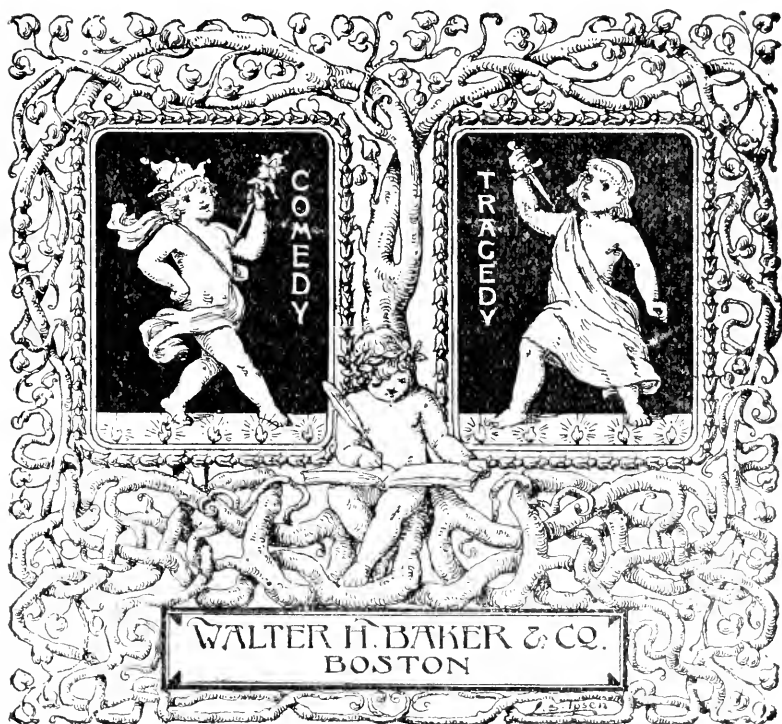


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Three Dear Friends

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No. 5 Hamilton Place, Boston, Massachusetts

Three Dear Friends

A Feminine Episode in One Act

By
KATHARINE METCALF ROOF

*Originally produced at B. F. Keith's Bijou Theatre, Boston,
under the management of Josephine Clement*

BOSTON
WALTER H. BAKER & CO.
1914

Three Dear Friends

CHARACTERS

(As originally produced at B. F. Keith's Bijou Theatre, Boston,
September 29, 1913.)

MILDRED	Marjorie Fairbanks.
PEGGY	Betty Barnicoat.
EVA	Gertrude Breen.
MILDRED'S MAID	Agnes Cave.

NOTE

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FEB 21 1914

Three Dear Friends

SCENE.—*A corner of the drawing-room in MILDRED's house. It is about quarter before four and is MIL.'s day at home. MIL. is inspecting the tea table. She addresses the MAID who stands awaiting instructions.*

MIL. I think everything is here. Be sure the water is boiling. I'll ring when I want it. (*Listens.*) There is some one now.

(*PEGGY comes exuberantly through the open door. She is a pretty girl dressed in the extreme of fashion, rather restless and over-animated and extremely well pleased with herself.*)

PEG. My dear! (*She embraces MIL. effusively.*)

MIL. (*to MAID*). Bring the hot water now.

(*MAID goes out with silver kettle.*)

PEG. I came early so I would be sure to find you alone. I hope nobody will come.

MIL. You have something to tell me?

PEG. Rather!

MIL. Another man?

PEG. How did you guess? It is so satisfactory to tell you things, Milly. You always understand.

MIL. I've just had a telephone from Eva. She has something to tell me, too.

PEG. Is she coming this afternoon? (*MIL. nods.*) How tiresome of her! How can you stand that dismal limp creature, Milly?

MIL. (*laughing*). Poor Eva! I thought you used to be such friends?

PEG. I got tired of hearing her talk about herself all the time. Then she is always butting into my conversations with

ARTHUR. If you could see how bored he looks ! I suppose one oughtn't to blame her. The poor little thing is simply dotty about him.

MIL. Arthur ?

PEG. Arthur Chisholm. That's what I came to talk about.

MAID *enters with the silver kettle which she sets in place over the alcohol lamp.*

MAID. Anything else, miss ?

MIL. Nothing, thank you.

[*Exit MAID.*

PEG. The situation is really getting serious —

MIL. You are speaking of Arthur—Chisholm ?

PEG. (*nodding*). Yes. Milly ! what did he say when you asked him what he thought about me ? (*As MIL. does not answer at once.*) You did ask him, didn't you ? You promised you would.

MIL. Yes, I—spoke of you.

PEG. (*jumping excitedly in her chair*). Milly ! What did he say ?

MIL. He said you were very vivacious.

PEG. Vivacious ! That means that one is attractive and er—a—clever, I suppose. I don't know that I care about having men think I am clever.

MIL. He spoke of how pretty you are. But you are used to having men say that.

PEG. I see. He didn't take you into confidence. So I am going to because my conscience is really beginning to trouble me. Dicky Warner says I am perfectly unfeeling and heartless. I am afraid I have been rather, but I've made up my mind not to trifle with Arthur Chisholm's affections. There is something so sort of deep and serious about him. It makes you feel as if he wouldn't get over a thing easily. Of course I don't believe in broken hearts and lifelong loves and that sort of thing but when a man looks at you with that look in his eyes —

(*Pauses dreamily helping herself to salted almonds.*)

MIL. (*busy with the alcohol lamp*). Some particular kind of look ?

PEG. Yes, a sort of deep wistful adoring look. And when he said to me —

MIL. (*a little hastily*). Are you sure you want to tell me what he says to you —

PEG. (*staring*). Why not? Don't I tell you *everything*?

MIL. (*with whimsical humor*). A great deal! But perhaps —

PEG. When he said to me with that deep look—"Did you *really* remember my chance words about the apple blossoms, Miss Peggy? But how delightful of you!" it meant more than if another man had said —

MIL. Apple blossoms? You—sent him some flowers?

PEG. (*pouting*). I sent him some *apple blossoms*, if you call that sending flowers. Of course one doesn't send a man *violets*. They came from the country. At least the florist said they did. Besides he is a writer.

MIL. On economics.

PEG. Well, whatever it is. I suppose all writers have temperament, favorite flowers and all that sort of thing. And he sent me the most wonderful note. I believe I have it in my bag. (*Rummages in her bag.*) Here it is.

(*Takes note out of her bag.*)

MIL. Won't you have some tea? It's just right now.

PEG. (*handing her the note with a giggle*). Read it.

MIL. When I've poured your tea.

PEG. I'll read it to you. It isn't just what he says. A man who didn't mean anything would say a lot more. But from one of his reserved nature —

MIL. (*handing her a cup*). Here is your tea.

PEG. (*taking it, setting it down and reading*). "I am overwhelmed by your kindness. You have brought the Spring into my dingy room —" I have "brought the Spring." You see. (*Giggles.*) He puts it so that it sort of suggests that I am the Spring. Then he signs it, "Faithfully yours." Oh, of course I know that is just a form with some people. But I think he is the kind of man who couldn't write it unless he meant some sort of chivalrous fealty — You understand. No, I don't suppose you do exactly, you are such a quiet little mouse, and you never see much of men. I don't mean that they don't like you, of course. They always say nice things about you—quiet, respectful sort of things. But you never say much about them. Then although he has never actually used the word love there is something in the way he says, "My dear child," that makes you feel —

MIL. (*interrupting*). I thought you just told me that you were absolutely unfeeling about men?

PEG. I am. That is, I always have been. (*Helps herself to chocolates.*) But there is something about Arthur Chisholm that makes me feel as if I could keep on caring about him.

MIL. (*hastily*). You wouldn't, I am sure you wouldn't.

PEG. (*taking another chocolate cream*). I would, Milly, I am sure I would! Course he hasn't actually proposed yet because when I see that look coming into his eyes—I have learned to know what that look in a man's face means—I simply change the subject. I am really sort of afraid to lead him on. Why, if I refused him he might do something desperate—commit suicide or go to Patagonia or something like that. I once knew a man who was crossed in love who went to New Guinea or some such place.

MIL. Chili, perhaps.

PEG. Then sometimes when I am talking he jumps up suddenly and leaves me as if he couldn't trust himself with me a moment longer. Perhaps I ought not to encourage him. (*Keeps on absently eating things from the table.*) What do you think?

MIL. That is rather a difficult question for any one else to answer, Peggy, especially for me because —

PEG. (*interrupting*). I know, you have had so little experience with men. But still you know *me* pretty well. Dear me! There is that stupid Eva coming up the steps. Now our talk is all spoiled.

MIL. Don't go. I have something to tell you both —

PEG. (*rising and interrupting her*). Thanks, dear, but I simply can't stand Eva. I'll come back another time. You haven't really given me any advice yet — (*MAID opens the door ushering in EVA, a very thin, solemn looking girl with large eyes. She is dressed in black and wears a single long-stemmed red rose. She greets MIL. and turns to PEG.* PEG., *effusively.*) Eva! How tiresome of you to come just as I have to go.

EVA (*unsmilingly*). So you were an even earlier bird.

PEG. Yes, but I am not taking away the dear little worm.

MIL. (*with a smile*). Suppose just once the dear little worm should turn — (*Both girls stare at her gravely.*)

EVA (*solemnly, after a moment*). Oh, it is a joke.

PEG. (*gaily*). I knew I had never done anything to make Milly turn against me.

EVA (*seating herself as PEG. takes leave*). I certainly haven't. Mildred is my best friend.

MIL. What would be your definition of a best friend? Can I give you some tea?

EVA. Thanks, dear. Oh, why, one's best friend is some one who is sympathetic and takes a real heart interest in your affairs. Now, Peggy wouldn't care if her best friend broke her neck, so long as there was a man left in the world for her to ogle.

MIL. (*lightly*). One would think that you were a despiser of men to hear you talk, Eva. Is it one lump or two?

EVA. Three. Oh, no, I don't despise men. But I am not crazy about the whole sex like Peggy. Neither am I indifferent like you, Mildred. I don't believe you would care if you never saw one again.

MIL. Oh, I am not quite so self-sufficient as that. I make one or two exceptions —

EVA (*not listening*). In fact I came here to talk to you about a man who has gradually come to be a factor in my life.

MIL. Another factor? Do I know him?

EVA. Yes, you know him slightly. It is the one that I call the Imprisoned Soul. Sometimes I have referred to him as the Dreamer.

MIL. A sort of masculine sleeping beauty?

EVA (*her eyes fixed as if on some vision*). Yes, his soul is asleep.

MIL. How did you discover that psychologic peculiarity?

EVA (*petulantly*). You are so literal, Mildred. I mean you can see that he has a deep, intense nature, but that he is not yet emotionally awake. You feel that no woman has yet plumbed his depths, that he has not loved.

MIL. Is he very young?

EVA. Why, no, not especially. What has that got to do with it? And he is the kind of man that when love comes to him it will be for always.

MIL. And he is in love with you?

EVA. I believe he is, although I am not sure that he himself is aware of it.

MIL. How has he shown it?

EVA (*in a low voice*). In his silences.

MIL. Oh!

EVA. Silence can say so much.

MIL. And the interesting thing is, one is never entirely sure just what it says.

EVA. Eh? Oh, yes, I dare say it would seem so to matter-

of-fact natures like yours. (*Takes another lump of sugar.*) But to one who has intuition—silence can say the things that are too deep for words.

MIL. Let me fill your cup. And he has made you feel some pleasant mutual understanding in these eloquent silences of his?

EVA (*forgetting her tea*). Oh, he has said things, too—wonderful things! He has told me that I have a beautiful soul, that I am not like other women.

MIL. That is unusual. It is more often women who talk about souls, don't you think?

EVA (*annoyed*). Well, I don't know that he actually used the word soul. But that was what he implied. You know I sent him some of my verses. One was inspired by him, but, of course, I didn't tell him that. It was called "Thine Eyes." It seemed perfectly natural to show them to him, he being a literary man.

MIL. He is a poet?

EVA. No, but he is a wonderful judge of poetry. He said my verses were unlike any he had ever read, especially the metre. He said it was unique. And I think Arthur Chisholm is a perfectly frank man——

MIL. (*with a slight gasp*). Arthur Chisholm!

EVA. Yes, I told you you knew him. You seem surprised. But of course *you* would never understand a reserved man like Arthur, you are too quiet yourself.

MIL. Peggy was speaking about him, too.

EVA. Peggy! I suppose she was. My dear, that girl is simply crazy about him. The way she runs after him is perfectly scandalous. It isn't as if he gave her the least excuse. Of course he is a fascinating man, but if one has any self-respect one doesn't chase after men who are utterly indifferent to one. Mildred, don't you think he has had some great tragedy in his life?

MIL. I can't say that it ever occurred to me.

EVA. I suppose not, you are so matter of fact. Yet it seems to me that any one looking at that sombre brow of his, that bitter-sweet smile, could see that he is a man with a past!

MIL. Dear me, I hope not!

EVA (*solemnly*). I am sure of it!

MIL. He is tremendously busy, you know, and very practical.

EVA (*with a little scream*). Practical! That shows how

little you know him. Really, your observation is very superficial, if you will excuse my saying so. I know that he has a dead heart or a buried love or something of that sort.

MIL. I thought you suggested a moment ago that his soul was asleep.

EVA. Oh, well—it's one or the other. There is something romantic about him. He is always getting sunk in thought; have you noticed that? I used to wonder about him. He will sit staring in front of him and not seem to hear a word one says. One day I sat next to him at a musicale. Every one else was talking but he never said a single word. He just sat there lost in thought right through the whole song. I said to him, "A penny for your thoughts"—and he looked up at me like one roused from a trance and didn't answer. I said, "I believe they were about a woman." Then he said (*assuming a melodramatic tone*), "You are right; they *were* about a woman!"

MIL. It doesn't sound like him —

EVA (*hastily*). No, I dare say not—as *you* know him. But do you know—there was something about the way he said that (*staring in front of her*), that for the first time made me feel that *I* was the woman!

MIL. You haven't had one of these little cakes.

(*Passes the dish.*)

EVA (*absently helping herself*). Thanks, dear. Then I noticed how he seemed to seek my society. He has never asked if he could call. I think he is shy about that, but at receptions in the thickest crowds he always manages to find me. In fact he said one time, "There is something so restful about you, Miss Eva. You don't talk a man to death the way some girls do." And I said to him as I just said to you, "I think silence says things that words cannot express."

MIL. (*busy with the teakettle*). What did he say to that?

EVA. Why, not much. That was the interesting thing. He seemed agitated. He just sort of stammered, "Ah, yes, quite so—I see you understand." And soon afterward he left. Now don't you think when a man is like that—first seeking you out, and calling you restful, then abrupt and agitated, that it seems—significant?

MIL. (*in a tone noticeable for absence of emphasis or feeling of any kind*). Mr. Chisholm is coming in this afternoon.

EVA (*excitedly*). Really! I didn't know you knew him well enough for that —

MIL. It is my "day."

EVA (*fluttered*). I'll stay till he comes. I wish I hadn't promised to go to the tailor's with Bessie. Oh, Milly! (*Coaxingly*.) Can't you ask us here together some time and leave us alone a little while? I *never* see him alone.

(*The sound of voices in the hall. MIL. rises, looking toward the door.*)

MIL. Some one is coming —

Enter PEG., in a flutter of excitement.

PEG. Oh, Milly, I am all out of breath. I had gone ten blocks before I found I'd lost it, then it occurred to me that I had left it here —

MIL. You left something?

PEG. (*excitedly*). My bag—with the letter — (*Recalls* EVA.) There was an important letter in it.

EVA (*coldly*). Why didn't you telephone?

PEG. (*haughtily*). I wanted my bag. Sorry if I interrupted you.

EVA (*staring out of the window*). I believe that's Arthur Chisholm now!

PEG. (*shrieking*). Arthur Chisholm! I just saw him turn in at the florist on the corner.

MIL. Girls, I have something to tell you. I would have told you before only I couldn't seem to find the right moment —

EVA. About Arthur Chisholm?

MIL. Yes, about Arthur Chisholm—and me.

BOTH GIRLS. You!

(*A pause, in which they stare at MIL.*)

MIL. (*at last, in a quiet voice*). Mr. Chisholm and I are engaged.

BOTH GIRLS (*shrieking in chorus*). Engaged!

MIL. I meant to tell you before. I ought to have, but I couldn't seem to get it in —

(*EVA stands stunned, staring ahead of her.*)

PEG. (*gathering up her things to depart, turns to address MIL.*). Arthur Chisholm engaged to *you*!

MIL. (*half laughing*). Wretched taste on his part.

EVA (*finding her voice*). That man of genius engaged to *you*!

MIL. Men of genius always choose inferior wives, you know.

PEG. Excuse me. I don't wish to be *de trop*.

(*Hurries toward the door.*)

EVA (*distractedly*). I can't see him here ——

PEG. (*protectingly to EVA, looking daggers at MIL.*). Come with me, dear!

MAID (*at the door announcing*). Mr. Chisholm.

(*Both girls rush blindly toward the door as the curtain falls.*)

CURTAIN

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LOST—A CHAPERON

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By Courtney Bruerton and W. S. Maulsby

Six male, nine female characters. Costumes modern; scenery, an interior and an easy exterior. Plays a full evening. An excellent comedy with the true college atmosphere but with its scenes away from actual college life. A breezy lot of college girls in camp lose their chaperon for twenty-four hours, and are provided by a camp of college boys across the lake with plenty of excitement. The parts are all good and of almost equal opportunity, the situations are very funny and the lines full of laughs. This is sure to be liked by the young people for whom it is intended, and is strongly recommended for high-school performance. *Price, 25 cents.*

CHARACTERS

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JACK ABBOTT, } <i>Tuft's sub-freshmen, camping with Higgins</i>	Stanley M. Brown
FRED LAWTON, }	Arthur J. Anderson
RAYMOND FITZHENRY, <i>a Harvard student</i>	Arthur T. Hale
DICK NORTON, } <i>off-hill engineers</i>	Ernest A. Larrabee
TOM CROSBY, }	Ferdinand Bryham
MARJORIE TYNDALL, <i>George's cousin; a Smith girl</i>	Helen J. Martin
ALICE BENNETT, }	Dorothy F. Entwistle
AGNES ARABELLA BATES, }	Edith H. Bradford
RUTH FRENCH, }	Marjorie L. Henry
BLANCHE WESTCOTT, }	Beatrice L. Davis
MRS. HIGGINS, <i>the chaperon. George's mother</i>	Effie M. Ritchie
MRS. SPARROW, <i>a farmer's wife. (Not in the original cast.)</i>	
LIZZIE, }	
MANDY, } <i>her daughters.</i>	

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—The Girls' Camp at Sherwood, 7 A. M.

ACT II.—The Fellows' Camp at Sherwood, 8 A. M.

ACT III.—Same as Act I, 10 A. M.

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Two male, two female characters. Costumes modern; scene, an interior. Plays twenty minutes. A capital sketch of Hebrew life and character, combining good comedy with genuine pathos. Moves very swiftly and is very effective. Can be strongly recommended for either vaudeville use or for amateur theatricals. *Price, 15 cents.*

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GEORGE CAROTHERS, *his chum, who also seeks experience.*

MR. SPENCER, *his father, who owns an oil well.*

HANS DINKLEDERFER, *his undoing, the leader of a little German band.*

RICHARD, *servant at the Spencers'.*

MRS. SPENCER, *Ned's mother, who feels the responsibility of the oil well and has social aspirations.*

DOLLY SPENCER, *his sister, who has a mind of her own.*

MISS SNAP, *a detective.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Fred Spencer's rooms at Clearfield College.

ACT II.—The Spencer home. One week after Act I.

ACT III.—The Spencer home. Ten minutes after Act II.

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MADAME ELIZABETH KENT-COKE, *Prosecuting Attorney.*

MADAME TOMASIA ERSKINE, *Attorney for Defendant.*

"DOTTY" DEVELIN, *the Defendant.*

CLERK OF THE COURT.

SHERIFF.

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MISS NANCY ANN SIMS, *another spinster of doubtful age.*

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Witnesses for Defendant

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ULRICA, *his daughter.*

CECIL, *his son.*

VINING, *his servant.*

CAPT. the HON. CLIVE TREVOR.

The Jacobson Family

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REBECCA, *his wife.*

ESTHER, *his daughter.*

ADRIAN, *his son.*

MAXIMILIAN, *his servant.*

WALTER LEWIS, *musical agent.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I

SCENE.—Morning room in Sir John Cotswold's house in the Cotswold Park Estate, Kensington, London.

ACT II

SCENE.—Drawing-room in Sir Isaac Jacobson's house. Next Door. The same afternoon.

ACT III

SCENE.—Same as Act I. Three days later.

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Four males, four females. Costumes modern; scenery, an easy interior. Plays thirty minutes. An easy and entertaining little play exactly suited for amateur acting in schools or elsewhere. Just the sort of thing half way between farce and comedy that is best liked. Well recommended.

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